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Republican and Democratic Platforms
By E. J. Hale

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REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL PLATFORMS COMPARED

By Hon. E. J. HALE.

The platforms of the two parties this year are as widely divergent as the candidates themselves are dissimilar. The contrast, so favorable to the Democratic cause in the case of the candidates, will be found to be equally as favorable in the case of the platforms. It is useful to note the salient features of this difference, as follows:

THE PREAMBLES.

The Democratic preamble rejoices at the awakening of the people to the political corruption by which the representatives of predatory wealth have preyed upon them, and declares that this must again become a people's government administered according to the Jeffersonian maxim of "Equal rights to all, special privileges to none."

The Republican preamble declares that under the rule of the Republican party conscience and courage in public station and higher standards of right and wrong in private life have become cardinal principles of political faith, and that the abuse of wealth, the tyranny of power and all the evils of privilege and favoritism have been put to scorn by the simple, manly virtues of justice and fair play.

The Democratic view, as above, is sustained, and the Republican view condemned by President Roosevelt in his messages and Mr. Taft in his acceptance of the nomination.

In the President's message to Congress last January, he said:

"The attacks by these great corporations on the administration's actions have been given a wide circulation throughout the country, in the newspapers and otherwise, by those writers and speakers who, consciously or unconsciously, act as the representatives of predatory wealth—of the wealth accumulated on a giant scale by all forms

of iniquity, ranging from the oppression of wage-earners to unfair and unwholesome methods of crushing out competition, and to defrauding the public by stock-jobbing and the manipulation of securities. Certain wealthy men of this stamp, whose conduct should be abhorrent to every man of ordinary decent conscience, and who commit the hideous wrong of teaching our young men that phenomenal business success must ordinarily be based on dishonesty, have during the last few months made it apparent that they have banded together to work for a reaction. Their endeavor is to overthrow and discredit all who honestly administer the law, to prevent any additional legislation which would check and restrain them, and to secure, if possible, a freedom from all restraint, which will permit every unscrupulous wrong-doer to do what he wishes unchecked, provided he has enough money."

Mr. Taft in his notification speech says that the evils referred to by the President have crept in during the last ten years. He declares that during this time some "prominent and influential members of the community, spurred by financial success and in their hurry for greater wealth, became unmindful of the common rules of business honesty and fidelity, and of the limitations imposed by law upon their actions"; and that "the revelations of the breaches of trusts, disclosures as to rebates and discriminations by railroads, the accumulating evidence of the violations of the anti-trust laws by a number of corporations, and the over-issue of stocks and bonds of interstate railroads for the unlawful enriching of directors and for the purpose of concentrating the control of railroads under one management," have "quickened the conscience of the people and brought on a moral awakening."

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ECONOMY IN ADMINISTRATION.

The Democratic platform calls attention to the "frightful extravagance" of the Republican Congress in the session just ended, which appropriated \$1,008,000,000, entailing a deficit of more than \$60,000,000; and denounces this waste of the people's money as a crime against the millions of working men and women from whose earnings the great proportion of these colossal sums must be extorted through excessive tariff and other indirect taxes.

The Republican platform is silent on this subject—not even making a promise of reform.

ALARMING INCREASE IN OFFICEHOLDERS.

The Democratic platform calls attention to the increase in the number of officeholders, which during the past six years has amounted to 99,319, entailing an additional expenditure of nearly \$60,000,000 a year; and denounces this great and growing increase as not only unnecessary and wasteful, but as indicating the purpose to keep the Republican party in power at public expense by increasing the number of its retainers and dependents.

The Republican platform makes no reference to this significant and alarming state of affairs.

THE SPEAKER'S ARBITRARY POWER.

The most potent obstacle to the "Rule of the People" is the arbitrary power which the rules and regulations governing the House of Representatives confer upon the Speaker. By means of them, the House of Representatives—the people's forum in our scheme of government—has ceased to be a deliberative and legislative body, and the will of the Speaker has become supreme.

The Democratic platform pledges the party, if restored to power, to the adoption of such rules and regulations as will restore the control of legislation to a majority of the members of the House.

The Republican platform is silent on this vital subject.

MISUSE OF PATRONAGE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A DYNASTY.

The Democratic platform condemns the act of the present Chief Executive in using the patronage of his high office

to secure the nomination for the Presidency of one of his Cabinet officers. Such an act marks the first step in the establishment of a dynasty, and nullifies the unwritten law against a third term.

The Republican platform is naturally silent on this point.

PUBLICITY OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

The Democratic platform demands Federal legislation which shall forever terminate the partnership between corporations and the Republican Party, by which that party has secured vast sums of money with which to purchase elections, in return for permission to the corporations to continue their encroachments on the rights of the people—for example, through the tariff tax and the other sources of predatory wealth. That such a partnership exists was established beyond a reasonable doubt by the sworn testimony of witnesses examined in the insurance investigation in New York, and the open admission—unchallenged by the Republican National Committee—of a single individual that he himself, at the request of the Republican candidate for the Presidency, raised over a quarter of a million of dollars to be used in a single State during the closing hours of the campaign of 1904. The Democratic remedy is the enactment of a law prohibiting any corporation from contributing to a campaign fund and any individual from contributing an amount above a reasonable maximum and providing for the publication before election of all such contributions above a reasonable minimum.

The Republican platform is naturally silent on this subject also, the Republican Convention, when the matter was brought up, repudiating the plank by a vote of 880 to 94. Driven by the action of the Democratic Convention to apologize for his own convention, Mr. Taft said in his speech of acceptance that, if elected President, he would urge the passage of a law on this subject, but he failed to say that he favors the publication of the contributions before the election. Such publication, intended to influence the voters, would of course be valueless after the votes have been cast.

THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES.

The Democratic platform concurs with Jefferson in believing in "the sup-

port of the State governments in all their rights as the most competent administration for our democratic concerns and the surest bulwark against anti-republican tendencies; and in the preservation of the General Government in its whole constitutional vigor as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad," and *opposes the centralization implied in the suggestion, now frequently made, that the powers of the General Government should be extended by judicial construction.* It declares that there is no twilight zone between the Nation and the State in which exploiting interests can take refuge from both; that it is as necessary that the Federal Government shall exercise the powers delegated to it as it is that the State governments shall use the authority reserved to them; but that Federal remedies for the regulation of interstate commerce and for the prevention of private monopoly shall be added to, not substituted for, State remedies.

Upon this supremely important subject, also, so dear to the patriot's heart, the Republican platform is silent.

POPULAR ELECTION OF SENATORS.

The shift of the incidence of the checks and balances of the Constitution which Republican control of the Government has caused has rendered necessary a change in the mode of electing United States Senators. The Democratic platform, in harmony with the impulse which caused some of the older States to substitute popular elections of Governor and Judges for elections of those officers by the Legislature, declares that it favors a similar change in the election of United States Senators. It does not of course favor a change in the apportionment of two Senators to each State, but a change only in the mode of their election—that is, from the present mode of election by the Legislature to election by direct vote of the people. Such a reform, it declares, is the gateway to other national reforms. In his speech of acceptance, Mr. Bryan says: "Every remedial measure of a national character must run the gauntlet of the Senate. The President may personally incline toward a reform; the House may consent to it; but as long as the Senate obstructs the reform, the people must wait. Shall we open the gate," he asks, "or shall we allow the exploiting

interests to bar the way by the control of this branch of the Federal Legislature?"

The popular election of Senators would require an amendment to the Constitution. As far back as the Fifty-second Congress a resolution proposing the necessary constitutional amendment was passed by that body by a vote that was practically unanimous. A similar resolution passed the Fifty-third Congress. Both these Congresses were Democratic. The Republicans gained control of the next Congress as a result of the elections of 1894, and in the Fifty-fourth Congress the proposition died in committee. The sentiment, however, has so grown among the people that it has forced three Republican Congresses since to follow the example set by the Democrats; nearly two-thirds of the States have recorded themselves in its favor, and three Democratic national platforms—those of 1900, 1904 and 1908—have demanded this reform. "The United States Senate, however," as Mr. Bryan points out, "impudently and arrogantly obstructs the passage of the resolution, notwithstanding the fact that the voters of the United States, by an overwhelming majority, demand it. And this refusal is the more significant when it is remembered that a number of Senators owe their election to great corporate interests." The Republican National Conventions of 1900 and 1904, following the Senatorial lead, ignored the subject, and the Republican National Convention of 1908 rejected the proposition by a vote of 866 to 114.

With the *Democratic platform favoring the popular election of Senators* by a unanimous vote of the Democratic National Convention, and the *Republican platform silent on the subject* by a vote of 866 to 114 in the Republican National Convention, the suggestion of Mr. Taft that it is not a party question is of course without weight.

In response to the question, "Shall the people rule?" which the Democratic platform avers is the overshadowing issue in all the questions now under discussion, Mr. Bryan in his speech of acceptance describes the obstacles to the rule of the people under three heads. These are:

The purchase of the Presidency by contributions of money from the favor-seeking corporations (referred to above in this article); the control of the Senate by the exploiting interests, who are

able to maintain a lobby in the State Legislatures, but not in every home-
stead; and the substitution of the arbitrary rule of the Speaker for that of the majority of the House of Representatives (referred to above in this article).

But it is the popular election of Senators, which the platform describes as "the gateway to other national reforms," which shall re-establish the rule of the people, and Mr. Bryan has pledged himself, if elected, to convene Congress in extraordinary session immediately after the inauguration and to ask among other things for the fulfillment of the platform pledge in respect to the popular election of Senators.

THE TARIFF.

It will be noted that up to this point the platform has concerned itself with the question of reform in the administration of the Government, so that it may become responsive once more to the popular will. The remainder of the platform is devoted to fiscal and other subjects with which party platforms have chiefly dealt hitherto, and which do not require elaboration in an article of this kind.

First among these subjects is properly placed the tariff, which was the thin edge of the wedge of the class legislation which now has caused the life of the many to be unduly strenuous and without adequate reward, in order that the few may accumulate colossal fortunes. On this subject the platforms of the two parties present a clear-cut issue—the Democratic platform adhering to the doctrine of the Constitution, and the Republican platform declaring for class legislation ("protection," so-called) in defiance of the Constitution. The subject is treated exhaustively by Mr. Bryan in his speech at Des Moines, Iowa, on the 21st of August, a copy of which may be had on application to the State or the National Democratic Headquarters.

Briefly stated, the *Democratic platform* calls for the revision of the tariff by the *reduction* of import duties; whereas the *Republican platform* calls for a revision of the tariff without specifying whether the revision is to be *up or down*. It says: "In all the tariff legislation, the true principle of protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of pro-

duction at home and abroad, together with a reasonable profit to American industries," and that the "wage-earners of this country are the most direct beneficiaries of the protective system."

It is admitted by all the authorities that American labor is the most efficient in the world, and that the labor cost in any manufactured article is less in America than elsewhere. Therefore the American laborer does not need and derives no benefit from protection. That being so, the protection accorded to a given industry can only benefit the employer. Evidently trusting that the people would not become enlightened on this point before their party had secured another lease of power, the Republican platform makers added the new proposition quoted above, "together with a reasonable profit to American industries." As it is admitted that the protected manufacturers write the tariff schedules which the Republican Congress enacts into law, and they will be the judges of what constitutes "a reasonable profit," the inference is that the Republicans, if successful in the coming election, will rely upon their tariff declarations as authority from the voters to "revise" the tariff by increasing the duties.

The *Democratic platform* uses these simple words on this subject, which are unambiguous and do not require explanation, viz.:

"We favor immediate revision of the tariff by the reduction of import duties. Articles entering into competition with trust-controlled products should be placed upon the free list and material reduction should be made in the tariff on the necessities of life, especially upon articles competing with such American manufactures as are sold abroad more cheaply than at home; and gradual reductions should be made in such other schedules as may be necessary to restore the tariff to a revenue basis."

INCOME TAX.

The *Democratic platform* favors a constitutional amendment "authorizing Congress to levy and collect a tax upon individual and corporate incomes, to the end that wealth shall bear its proportionate share of the burdens of the Federal Government." This has become necessary since the law passed by Congress and approved by the President, in 1894, levying such a tax, was

declared to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

The *Republican platform* is silent upon this point.

THE TRUSTS.

The trusts are the outgrowth of the high protection tariff. Indeed, Mr. Hayemeyer, head of the sugar trust, said truly that "the tariff is the mother of trusts."

The Democratic tariff plank contains a provision favoring the removal of the tariff from imports which compete with trust-made goods. It is believed that this would greatly lessen the extortion practiced by the trusts, and cause the dissolution of many monopolistic combines, but a separate plank was devoted to the trusts, an exhaustive discussion of which is contained in Mr. Bryan's speech at Indianapolis on August 25th. A copy of this speech can be had by applying to the State or National Democratic Headquarters.

The difference between the two parties on the trust question is sharp and radical.

A trust being an organization in restraint of trade, and the Democratic Party being the defender of competition, the *Democratic platform* declares that trusts should be exterminated, holding, in harmony with Mr. Jefferson's position, that "a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable."

The *Republican platform*, on the contrary, favors control of the trusts. The nature of the control which the Republican Party would exercise if Mr. Taft were elected President is inferable from Mr. Taft's speech last year announcing his candidacy. He then suggested that the present anti-trust law be so amended as to permit "reasonable" restraint of trade. "Such an amendment," observed Mr. Bryan, "would be as absurd as an amendment to the law against burglary limiting the law to cases in which more than two burglars entered the house at one time or took more than half they found."

The *Republican platform* says that "the Republican Party passed the Sherman anti-trust law over Democratic opposition and enforced it after Democratic dereliction." As a matter of fact, the Sherman anti-trust law was passed eighteen years ago, and during all that time, with the exception of four years, the Republican Party has controlled the Executive Department

of the Government and, with the exception of two years of the four, the House of Representatives. Instead of dereliction by the Democrats, the Democratic Party has been, year after year, urging the strict enforcement of that law, and the Republican Party has been explaining year after year why it was impossible to enforce it. One of the reasons which they do not give at present is the circumstance that trust officials are closely connected with the Republican Party management. The chairman of the Republican Speakers' Committee, for example, is Mr. Dupont of Delaware, who is defendant in a suit brought by the Government for violation of the anti-trust law.

The following extracts from Mr. Bryan's speech on trusts will strike many responsive chords.

"The business of the country has felt the pressure of the trusts. The retailer has been compelled to enter into contracts which restrict his management of his own affairs, he has found the terms of sale and payment changed to his disadvantage, and he has been forced to carry more and more of the risks of trade. He is convinced that there are no good trusts and that his only safety is in the Democratic plan which lays the axe at the root of the tree.

"The traveling men naturally take especial interest in the trust question, because the more complete the monopoly secured by a corporation the less they are needed. We have no more intelligent class than the representatives of commerce, and their retirement from the road would mean a serious loss to the country, while a few promoters would be the only persons benefited, they gaining by the capitalization of the salaries saved by the elimination of competition.

"Industrial independence is necessary to political independence. The free exercise of the rights of citizenship is impossible when a few men control the industries in which millions are employed. God forbid that we should compel the wage-earners of the nation to address their petitions to trust magnates, and ask for their daily bread. Already we have seen how prone the monopolist is to make employment depend upon the willingness of the employee to prostitute his ballot to the service of his corporate master.

"This question should be settled now; we cannot afford to bequeath it as a

legacy of woe to a succeeding generation. The conscience of the people is already awakened, and the conscience is the most potent force of which man has knowledge. Where law makes one righteous, conscience controls a hundred; where one is kept from wrongdoing by fear of prison doors, a thousand are restrained by those invisible walls which conscience rears about us—barriers which are stronger than walls of granite. It is upon the conscience that human institutions rest, and without a stirring of the conscience no great reform is possible. To a national conscience already aroused we appeal, with the pledge that a Democratic victory will mean the ringing out of industrial despotism and the ringing in of a new era in which business will be built upon its merits, and in which men will succeed, not in proportion to the coercion they may be able to practice, but in proportion to their industry, their ability and their fidelity."

RAILROAD LEGISLATION.

The planks in the two platforms relating to railroad legislation exhibit the same contrast that runs through them all, favorable to the Democratic position: the Republican plank is vague and insufficient, while the Democratic plank is full, clear and explicit.

The *Democratic platform* differs from the Republican platform in the respect that it favors: (1) rate regulation by the Interstate Commerce Commission of railroads engaged in interstate commerce, based on a fair and just *valuation* of all the elements of value; (2) such *reduction* in transportation rates as conditions permit, without entailing a reduction of wages, inadequate service or injustice to legitimate investments; and (3) the *enlarging* of the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission so that it may declare a rate illegal upon its own initiative and without being compelled to wait, as now, until complaint has been made to it by the shipper.

The *Republican platform* is silent upon these points. The Republican Convention, it may be added, rejected the plank providing for the *physical* valuation of railroads by a vote of 917

to 63. The Democratic Convention included this as one of the elements of value by a unanimous vote.

THE GUARANTEE OF BANK DEPOSITS.

Here the *Democratic platform* declares for a guarantee and protection of the people's money and a prevention of panics as preferable to United States Postal Savings Banks, which drain the money from the country to the Treasury and money centers.

The *Republican platform* declares only for the latter, and Mr. Taft displays want of knowledge and want of sympathy for this great reform.

THE OTHER PLANKS IN THE PLATFORMS.

The other planks in the two platforms, though of less importance than those discussed above, are nevertheless deserving of comparison and will be the subject of another article to be issued at an early date.

THE DEMOCRATIC SUMMING UP.

The "conclusion" of the Democratic platform is worth reproducing here, as follows:

"The Democratic Party stands for democracy; the Republican Party has drawn to itself all that is aristocratic and plutocratic.

"The Democratic Party is the champion of equal rights and opportunities to all; the Republican Party is the party of privilege and private monopoly. The Democratic Party listens to the voice of the whole people and gauges progress by the prosperity and advancement of the average man; the Republican Party is subservient to the comparatively few who are the beneficiaries of governmental favoritism. We invite the co-operation of all, regardless of previous political affiliation or past differences, who desire to preserve a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and who favor such an administration of the government as will insure as far as human wisdom can that each citizen shall draw from society a reward commensurate with his contribution to the welfare of society."

A FEW HINTS TO VOTERS.

[From The Commoner.]

Before casting your vote with the Republican Party remember some of these things:

1. The failure of the Republican Party to take steps to provide for electing Senators by popular vote and the refusal of the Republican Convention to endorse the reform.

2. The failure of the Republican Congress to pass a bill providing for publicity of campaign contributions and the refusal of the Republican Convention even to endorse the reform.

3. The failure of the Republican Congress to pass a postal savings bank bill and the hypocrisy of the party in endorsing this reform, which it had just ignored in Congress.

4. The passage by the Republican Congress of a currency bill which enables speculative banks to convert all

sorts of securities into currency and actually reduces the margin of safety for depositors instead of increasing it.

5. The destruction of representative government in the lower house, where the Republican Speaker and his committee on rules have all power and not even a majority can get a vote on a popular bill if the Speaker refuses consent.

6. The forty-nine per cent. increase in the cost of living under the Republican Dingley tariff and its trusts, while wages have increased only nineteen per cent.

7. The refusal of the Republican Congress to amend this tariff, although its iniquities are admitted and future revision has been reluctantly promised by its friends after the storm is over.

EXTRACT FROM W. W. KITCHIN'S GREAT SPEECH AT SPARTA, SEPT. 2, 1908, ON CORPORATIONS.

Speaking of corporations, Mr. Kitchin said that the Democratic Party is not *against corporations*. It recognizes their usefulness and even their necessity in the industrial life of the Republic. It understands their importance in developing our wonderful resources. It would place no unjust burdens upon them and would hamper them with no wrongful restraints. But as creatures of the law it insists that they obey the law. Existing by the will of the people's Legislature, they must conform to its constitutional mandates. The Legislature itself has no warrant for existence except for the benefit of the people, and it has no right to permit any of its creatures to oppress or in any way injure the public. It has no right to create anything and then allow its creature to become a public evil. The creature should never undertake to control the creator. Corporations have rights. They have privileges which no one disputes. A corporation has no soul, no conscience, no physical body. It is a law-made person, exempt from the dangers of future punishment, exempt from the pangs of remorse and the restraints of morality, exempt from the fear of jails and penitentiaries.

The Democratic Party insists that this law-made man shall not be superior to the Lord-made man, and it insists that the principle of making the officers who control it fully responsible for its violations of the law is essential to a perfect protection of the public from the evils of corporate wrongdoing.

We believe that nine-tenths of the corporations operating in this State obey the law and do a legitimate and honest business. There is no public complaint against them, but everywhere there is public approval of their enterprise. There is no criticism of our banks, our cotton mills, our mercantile corporations or of any other corporation doing a competitive business. They have not been charged with discriminations, extortion or watered stock. They have universal praise for the great part they have played and are playing in the upbuilding of our State, in the rapid increase of our wealth, in the employment of our people and in the spirit of progress which they carry and which they inspire. They, like individuals, suffer from the unlawful conduct of men and corporations; like individuals, they bear the injury inflicted by men and corpora-

tions that follow the ways of wrong. Neither in Congress nor in Legislatures, neither in platforms nor editorials can there be found expressions from Democratic sources of hostility to corporations that do legitimate business and sin not. While enemies of Democracy have appealed to business men by falsely charging that the Democratic Party is against corporations and business, these enemies, though denounced and defied, have been unable to produce a scintilla of evidence, by word or act, to substantiate their baseless charge. The Democratic Party discriminates *between individuals who obey the law and those who violate it*, and it has the courage to call individuals to the bar of justice. It likewise discriminates between the corporations that obey the law and those which violate it, and it has the courage to call corporations to the bar of justice. The Democratic Party is one of principles, and it has the courage of its principles when opposed by corporate wrong as well as when opposed by individual wrong. It believes in justice, even-handed and universal, and it strives toward the attainment of universal right, regardless of whether a corrupt man or a corrupt corporation, whether a humble thief or a plundering trust disputes its efforts. *It believes the child of the lowly cottage on the hill-side and the child of the marble palace on the asphalt street should have the same opportunities to enjoy the fruits of their labor and the same restraints upon their conduct towards their fellow men, and the same punishment for their violations of the established laws of men.* The poorest boy that ever placed a bare foot on Carolina soil has a right to call upon all his fellows to protect him from injustice of every kind, and to aid him and his kindred in having a government that will permit none to do him wrong, none to oppress and none to make afraid—that will exert its entire power, without fear and without favor, to prevent a plunderer from laying tax upon his toil or placing bonds upon his energy—a government under whose certain protection he can engage in the activities of life with confidence that whatever rewards his hands or intellect may earn shall be by him and his enjoyed without tribute to any save his country's demands, and knowing that so long as he violates no moral law the esteem of men shall be his, and so long as he does right

under the law of men his country will count him true, and that under all conditions his country will vouchsafe to him exemption from the unlawful greed of all who seek to take from him, by direction or indirection, any part of the product of his labor without fair dealing and just compensation. These considerations lead one to necessarily oppose industrial monopolies.

Monopolies are of three classes: First, those created by law; second, natural monopolies, in naturally non-competitive enterprises; and, third, unnatural monopolies, in the naturally competitive enterprises. The first class includes patents granted by the law for a limited time to encourage inventions of mankind (during which time the monopolist is expected to overcharge the public on his patented article), and public offices, for which the law always fixes the prices to prevent overcharging, such as the Register of Deeds' office. There is no public controversy over monopolies of the two other classes. The Democratic position is that all the natural monopolies can be and should be regulated by law and their prices fixed by law, and that the unnatural monopolies cannot be successfully regulated, that their prices cannot be fixed by law, that they are organized for an unlawful purpose, do now violate the law, should be destroyed, and that those who cause the violation of the law should be treated as criminals and punished. The natural monopolies are such as ferries, gristmills (before we had steam engines to furnish competition the man who happened to own water power in a neighborhood had a monopoly), railroads, water works, electric light and gas plants and street railways, every one of which is in the nature of a public service concern. The principle underlying their regulation by fixing prices is the one which required fixing the tolls of the gristmills. It was no reflection upon the honesty of the owner of the mill which suggested that the charges be fixed by law; it was a simple recognition of the fact, gleaned from the experience of a thousand years and appreciated by every one who knows human nature, that a monopolist who has the power to fix prices free from the healthful effect of competition will overcharge the public; in other words, he will charge as much as the business will bear, whether extortionate or not.

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